Recommendation made by the Ragte Committee

1948. SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) What are the recommendations made by the Ragte Committee and what are the salient features thereof ;

(b) What are the recommendations which have been accepted by Government ; and

(c) What are the recommendations whoch have not so far been accepted ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (c) This Ministry is not aware of the constitution of any Committee called Ragte Committee and of its recommendations, salient features, etc. The question of accepting it's recommendations or otherwise by Government, therefore, does not arise.

Withdrawing of Coal Projects

1849. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Misister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of projects withdrawn due to Geo-mining conditions ;

(b) how much cost was involved in each of these projects ;

(c) whether these projects were not prospected and explored using modern technology before finalisation of the project Reports ;

(d) who is responsible for failure of these projects ;

(e) whether any accountability has been fixed ;

(f) if so, the details thereof ; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) During the 7th Five Year Plan period, 16 sanctioned underground coal projects were withdrawn/not taken up due to adverse geo-mining conditions. Total expenditure incurred on these projects was Rs. 5.83 Crs. Most of this expenditure was incurred on underground exploratory work for development.

(c) and (d) Geological prospecting in all these projects was carried out on traditional methods available at that point of time. Since there is always an element of uncertainty inherent in underground mining, the geo-mining conditions encountered in these mines could not have been predicted at the time of planning. As such, the responsibility cannot be fixed on one particular person or agency. Corrective measures are taken on the basis of earlier experience and improvements have been brought in planning as well as implementation.

(e) to (g) Do not arise.

Improvement in the quality of Coal

1850. SHRI PARMESHHAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that bulk of the coal produced through open cast mining is of very low quality ;

(b) if so, the details and reasons thereof ;

(c) whether it is possible to improve the quality of coal by adopting proper methods of mining by removing the band at the time of production of coal itself and

(d) the details of efforts made in this regard to improve the quality of coal by coal India Ltd ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (d) About 70% of the coal produced in Coal India group of companies is from opencast mines. The inherent quality of coal is not dependent on method of mining viz. Opencast or Underground. However in underground mining the deterioration of quality of coal is minimal as compared to opencast mining where there are higher chances of

extraneous overburden material getting mixed with coal during mechanical/bulk mining operation. Inspite of the best efforts made, it is not possible to fully segregate shale, stone etc. from coal in the process of mining and handling. However, in order to ensure despatch of coal free from extraneous material, Coal companies have taken the following steps :

(i) Stones are being segregated at the time of loading of coal.

(ii) Slow moving picking belts are being provided in coal handling plants for manual picking of shale & stone pieces.

(iii) Better supervision is being ensured at the time of loading to maintain quality of coal and to develop quality consciousness among workers, supervisors and executives.

Exploration strategy of coal in the country

1851. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the details of exploration strategy of coal adopted in the country ;

(b) whether it differs from the larger coal producing countries of the world ;

(c) if so, whether modernised strategy is not being followed in view of heavy investment made in Coal India Limited even after 20 years of nationalisation ; and

(d) if such a strategy has already been adopted, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (d) In India coal exploration is carried out in two stages. In the first stage Geological Survey of India (GSI) undertakes regional exploration for locating the potential coal bearing areas. This is followed by detailed exploration carried out by Central Mine Planning & Design Institute Limited (CMPDIL) directly as well as through Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd. (MECL), State Governments and private agencies for the purpose of mine planning and exploitation of coal reserves for meeting the demands of different sector of the economy. Inter-se priority of various prospects/blocks taken up for detailed exploration is decided taking into account factors like emerging demand and its location, availability of infrastructure for coal evacuation and techno-economics of the mine development including coal quality.

Each country decides its own strategy depending on the overall indigenous availability of energy resources like coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear, hydel etc. Since coal will continue to remain as a major source of commercial energy in India for coming few decades, modern exploration technologies like surface geophysical survey and down hole multi-parametric geophysical logging, electrical resistivity surveys, megnetic survey etc.. have been inroduced in almost all the coalfields in the country.

Adoption of new technology in the field of coal

1852. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in advanced coal producing countries like China, Australia and others, geological mapping followed by geophysical surveys and a few non-coring bore holes with bore hole logging and only very few coring bore holes to test the strata properties are done ;

(b) whether it is a fact that this technology produces more reliable information at a cheaper cost and faster rate ;

(c) whether it is also a fact that wherever required this information is supplemented by underground geophysical surveys ;

(d) if so, whether this method and technology been adopted ; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Exploration technology mix of surface